Approved For Release 2000/06/13 CIA

Report from Washington

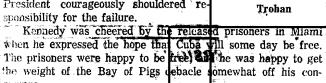
BY WALTER TROHAN

CHIEF OF CHICAGO TRIBUNES WASHINGTON BUREAU

ASHINGTON, Jan. 1—President Kennedy has ransomed his conscience and Cuban Premier Fidel Castro's appetite for blackmail has micreased by the semillon dollars in food, drugs, and money it fed upon in the release of the Bay

The release of the 1.113 resoners was admirably timed for Christmas, the season of joy, good will, thanksgiving, warmth, and family reunions. In the spirit of the day and the rejoicing over freedom for the prisoners, the fiasco of the bloody landing at the Bay of Pigs on April 17, 1961, was forgotten.

Forgotten also was the fact that President Kennedy had given the green light for the invasion without adequate air coverage. While his aids were frant trying to pass the buck of blame elsewhere, preferably on the Redublicans, the President courageously shouldered re-





HE RELEASE was effected thru the payment of 53 million dollars in foods, drugs, and tearly 3 millions in cash. Virtually all of this was put up by business men, whom the President said he had been warned aganist by his father, Joseph P. Kennedy. The President, who has filled his New Frontier with professors, has never recalled his father's warning against classroom "liberals."

Food and drug men were allowed tax deductions for their contributions, which became charity because they were relayed to Castro thru the American Red Cross. It would not seem that the general public was affected, yet Mitchell Rogovin, an official of the internal revenue service, said that the government's share of the cost could be 20 million dollars thru lost taxes. The government, in this reference, means the taxpayers who will have to make up the loss in revenue over the next few years.

What the indirect costs were to axpayers in military mobilization, military activities, government operations, and the like, will never be known. Est mates run into the tens and even the hundreds of millions.

Like all blackmailers, Castre hasn't stopped his demands. The ease with which his demands were met has inspired him to ask for more.

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Castro Ties Another String to Promise

CASTRO TIED a string on his promise to relatives of the ill-fated Cuban invasion brigater said that all those wanting to leave would be permitted to only f Pan American World Airways resumes its flights between Miami and Havana.

Private and commercial flights over the island were banned during the crisis over the construction of Russian missile bases. Pan American officials have no taste for resumption of the lights because restrictions and limited travel had occasioned by losses on the route.

Castro evidently wants the flights resumed for prestige purlogs. He is posing as a big man in Cuba because he has made he United States accede to his demands. Foodcand drugs will make the recipients happy for a time, so that there is no doubt is regime has been bolstered by the American payments.

Castro has held out the hope that about 20 American prisoners might be released during the negotiations for the release of the Bay of Pigs prisoners. Now, he will undoubtedly demandancem, in one form or another, for the release of the Americans.

Payment of blackmail is often as morally destructive to the payer as to the payee.